

DIFFERENT KINDS OF OUTDOOR PLAY²

PLAY is what children and youth do when they follow their own interests and ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons. Words often used to describe play include: freely chosen, self-motivated, personally directed, spontaneous, and fun.³ Play involves imagination, exploration, delight and a sense of wonder. Children play in ways that represent their experiences, show their ideas and feelings, and help them understand themselves, others and the world.⁴

OUTDOOR PLAY is play that happens outside. Outdoor play often includes some risk or nature play.

ACTIVE OUTDOOR PLAY includes play outdoors that involves physical activity, whether it's light or very intense.⁵



See page 36 for info on Loose Parts as one way to enhance child-led play.

CHILD-LED OUTDOOR PLAY is play that children lead and direct. Children use the items and space around them to choose how and what they will play. **The role of the adult in this type of play is to give children Permission to Play, Time to Play, Space to Play and Materials to Play with.**

See page 12 for more on the adult role in outdoor play.

See page 30 for more information on risk vs hazard.

RISKY PLAY is thrilling and exciting forms of play. It gives children the chance to be challenged, to test limits, and to explore boundaries. Risky play also helps children learn about the risk of injury and setting limits. Risky play involves uncertainty. The adult role in risky play is to make sure there aren't any things that could obviously hurt children in the play space while still allowing children to take risks in their play. Some dangerous items, considered hazards, could be broken glass, sharp edges or branches, and wire. Risky play is different for each child, and it changes as the child ages.

PHYSICAL LITERACY is when kids have a range of basic movement skills and the confidence to participate in a wide variety of sports and physical activities. Physical literacy is when kids have a range of basic movement skills and the confidence to participate in a wide variety of sports and physical activities. Kids who are physically literate can also apply their skills to new situations that are unfamiliar.⁶

See page 20 for more information on physical literacy.

Primary source: outdoorplaycanada.ca Glossary of Terms (2019)
For more info on Physical Literacy see activeforlife.com

This content forms part of a larger booklet entitled "Why Outdoor Play Matters for Children: A practical guide for parents and caregivers". To see the full booklet, and references, please go to recreationns.ns.ca.

